

REMARKS**I. Formal Matters**

Claim 21 has been added. Claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended.

The Specification has been amended to include support for the limitations presented in Claims 10 and 11. No new matter has been added.

Claim 1 has been amended to require that the claimed adhesive comprise at least about 3% water after one hour of equilibration at 50% relative humidity. Support for this Amendment can be found in the Specification, as originally filed on page 16, lines 31-32, and page 27, lines 6-7. Claim 6 has been amended to reflect dependency from Claim 5. Claim 11 has been amended to correct a typographical error. New Claim 21 has been added to require that the adhesive be formed by polymerizing a homogeneous aqueous reaction mixture comprising from about 5% to about 50% of a hydrophilic monomer, from about 10% to about 50% by weight of a plasticizer, up to 50% by weight of a non-ionic monomer, and up to 40% by weight of water. Support for new Claim 21 can be found in the Specification, as originally submitted, on page 16, lines 26-32. No new matter has been presented. Claims 1-21 remain in this case and are presented for the Examiner's reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following comments:

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the Specification and Claims by the current Amendments. The attached page is captioned "**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE.**"

II. Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to Claim 1, because of Applicants' use of the word "wearing." Applicants have amended Claim 1, as suggested by the Examiner, accordingly. Applicants thank the Examiner and respectfully request withdrawal of the Examiner's objection to Claim 1.

III. 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2 Rejection

The Examiner has rejected Claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2 as not providing sufficient antecedent basis for the term "C.". Applicants have amended Claim 6 to depend from Claim 5, thereby obviating the rejection. Based upon a fair reading of the Specification and Claims, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2 rejection.

IV. 35 U.S.C. §102(b) Rejection

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-11, 14, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Dietz, U.S. Patent No. 5,670,557. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the following reasons:

1. Applicants' invention, as now presented in Claim 1 by Amendment, requires that the adhesive comprise at least about 3% water after one hour of equilibration at 50% relative humidity. In other words, Applicants' claimed adhesive is further hydrated to provide a pressure sensitize adhesive.

2. Contrary to Applicants' claimed invention, *Dietz* requires dehydration of the composition to demonstrate "dry" adhesion. See Col. 42, lines 10-15.
3. In other words, the adhesive produced by *Dietz* does not have significant quantities of water initially, and yet further dries the disclosed adhesive to dryness.
4. Applicants respectfully remind the Examiner that the modulus of a material is not directly proportional to material thickness. Modulus is, indeed, independent of thickness.

Due to these considerations, *Dietz* fails to teach each and every element of Applicants' invention. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection with respect to Claim 1.

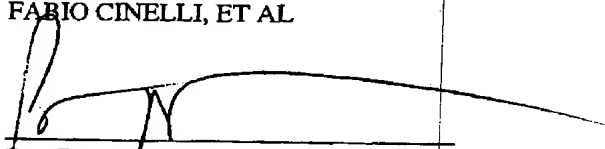
Because Claims 2-11, 14, and 15 all depend directly or indirectly from Applicants' independent Claim 1, they contain all of its limitations. For this reason, Applicants submit that the arguments made above concerning the allowability of Claim 1 are equally applicable to the rejection of Claims 2-11, 14, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Applicants therefore respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of dependent Claims 2-11, 14, and 15 over the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection.

IV. Summary

Based on the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that each of Applicants' remaining claims is in condition for allowance and favorable reconsideration is requested.

This response is timely filed pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.8 and M.P.E.P. §512, and therefore Applicants believe no fee is due. However, if any additional charges are due, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such charges from Deposit Account No. 16-2480 in the name of The Procter & Gamble Company.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

The Specification has been amended as follows:

The paragraph beginning on page 14, line 8, has been amended as follows:

According to the present invention the polymer component of the adhesive can be physically or chemically cross-linked in order to form the 3 dimensional matrix. Physical cross linking refers to polymers having cross links which are not chemical covalent bonds but are of a physical nature such that there are areas in the 3 dimensional matrix having high crystallinity or areas having a high glass transition temperature. Chemical cross-linking refers to polymers which are linked by chemical bonds. Preferably the polymer is chemically cross-linked by radiation techniques such as thermal-, E beam-, UV-, gamma or micro-wave radiation. Preferably, the polymer comprises less than 10% hydrocolloid particles by weight of the adhesive, and more preferably the polymer comprises less than 5% hydrocolloid particles by weight of the adhesive.

The Claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) An adhesive for a disposable absorbent article:

said disposable absorbent article comprising a [wearing] wearer facing surface and a garment facing surface opposed thereto;

said adhesive covering at least a portion of said [wearing] wearer facing surface;

said adhesive having an initial peel strength (P_i);

wherein said adhesive has a final peel strength (P_f) after exposure to water;

wherein the ratio of P_i to P_f is in the range of 2:1 to 2:4; and,

wherein said adhesive has a water absorption capacity of at least 3% by weight of said adhesive; and,

wherein said adhesive comprises at least about 3% water after one hour of equilibration at about 50% relative humidity.

6. (Amended) The adhesive of Claim [1] 5, wherein:

said viscous modulus ($G''_{25}(100 \text{ rad/sec})$) is defined by the equation:

$$G''_{25} \leq [(5.50 + C) \times 1700] \text{ Pa.}$$

11. (Amended) The adhesive of Claim 10, wherein said adhesive comprises less than 5% hydrocolloid particles by weight of said adhesive.

New Claim 21 has been added as follows:

21. (New) The adhesive of Claim 1, wherein said adhesive is formed by polymerizing a homogeneous aqueous reaction mixture comprising from about 5% to about 50% by weight of the reaction mixture of a hydrophilic monomer from about 10% to about 50% by weight of the reaction mixture of a plasticizer, and from about up to 50% by weight of the reaction mixture of a non-ionic monomer, and up to about 40% by weight of the reaction mixture of water.